

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Rokeby
other names/site number VDHR File # 048-0019

2. Location

street & number 5447 Kings Highway Not for publication N/A
city or town King George vicinity N/A
state Virginia code VA county King George code 099 zip code 22485

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the
National Register
 See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register
 removed from the National Register
 other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper _____

Date of Action _____

(Rev. 10-90)

U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceRokeby
King George County, VA**5. Classification****Ownership of Property** (Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>9</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>12</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A**6. Function or Use****Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC	Sub: Single dwelling; mansion
DOMESTIC	Sub: Single dwelling; summer/tenant house
DOMESTIC	Sub: Single dwelling; schoolhouse
DOMESTIC	Sub: Secondary structure; playhouse
DOMESTIC	Sub: Secondary structure; smokehouse
DOMESTIC	Sub: Secondary structure; garage
AGRICULTURE	Sub: Horticultural facility; garden gazebo
AGRICULTURE	Sub: Animal facility; horse barn
AGRICULTURE	Sub: Animal facility; sheep barn
AGRICULTURE	Sub: Animal facility; cattle run-in shed
LANDSCAPE	Sub: Garden
RECREATION AND CULTURE	Sub: Sports facility; tennis court

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC	Sub: Single dwelling; mansion
DOMESTIC	Sub: Single dwelling; summer/tenant house; WORK IN PROGRESS
DOMESTIC	Sub: Single dwelling; schoolhouse house; WORK IN PROGRESS
DOMESTIC	Sub: Secondary structure; playhouse; storage
DOMESTIC	Sub: Secondary structure; smokehouse; storage
DOMESTIC	Sub: Secondary structure; garage
AGRICULTURE	Sub: Horticultural facility; garden gazebo
AGRICULTURE	Sub: Animal facility; horse barn
AGRICULTURE	Sub: Animal facility; sheep barn; WORK IN PROGRESS
AGRICULTURE	Sub: Animal facility; cattle run-in shed
LANDSCAPE	Sub: Garden
RECREATION AND CULTURE	Sub: Sports facility; tennis court

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

EARLY REPUBLIC: Federal

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation	BRICK; CONCRETE
Roof	SYNTHETICS: Slate; METAL: Tin; ASPHALT
Walls	BRICK; WOOD: weatherboard
Other	<hr/> <hr/>

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☒ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE; AGRICULTURE; SOCIAL HISTORY; COMMERCE

Period of Significance circa 1828-1931

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Rokeby
King George County, VA

Significant Dates circa 1828; 1912; 1916-1920; 1931

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) Gustavus Brown Wallace; Langbourne Meade Williams

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- ☒ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☒ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources; Fredericksburg Public Library; Virginia Historical Society; King George Historical Society

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 50 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
A	18	303335	4237679	C	18	303457	4238609
B	18	303335	4238609	D	18	303432	4237740

☐ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Rokeby
King George County, VA

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Nancy W. Kraus

Organization: First & Main. LLC

date September 7, 2004

street & number: 6224 New Harvard Lane

telephone (804) 304-6053

city or town Glen Allen

state VA zip code 23059

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name William and Dorothy Boldon

street & number 5447 Kings Highway

telephone (540) 775-1714

city or town King George

state VA

zip code 22485

=====

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Continuation Sheet

Rokeby
King George County, Virginia

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SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The antebellum mansion known as Rokeby, circa 1828, in King George County, Virginia, reigns now, as it did at the time of construction atop a high hill with a magnificent view of the Rappahannock River Valley. Vistas are dramatic and impressive. The site for Rokeby is the level pinnacle of the largest in a concentric series of rolling hills that descend gently to the broad, flat valley below. Rokeby is a majestic Federal-style mansion, constructed of red brick laid in Flemish bond. The main block of the residence presents a formal façade and embodies numerous refined features of the Federal style including its symmetrical form, low-pitched hipped roof, smooth facade, tripartite windows, lintel-type window heads, and elliptical, leaded-glass fanlight with flanking sidelights. The original block was enlarged by the construction circa 1912 of a pair of flanking two-story, frame pavilions, appended to the east and west. In 1917, the west wing was substantially enlarged, encapsulated in red brick laid in Flemish bond. In their current form, the wings create an oddly asymmetrical appearance that contrasts with the harmony and balance of the main block. Seven dependencies are sited to the north, east, and west on lower planes, thus allowing Rokeby a prominent throne above and in front of the lesser subjects. On its fifty-acre land parcel, Rokeby and the restored smokehouse are the only structures known to survive from the antebellum period. Ruins of several buildings on adjacent land parcels once belonged to the plantation. In addition to the mansion and smokehouse, the estate also encompasses seven additional contributing buildings, circa 1917-1920. The early twentieth-century complex, constructed for the summer and week-end pleasure of the extended family of Langbourne Meade Williams of Richmond, Virginia, consists of: (1) schoolhouse; (2) summer/tenant house; (3) playhouse; (4) garage; (5) Sears, Roebuck catalog-ordered horse barn; (6) sheep barn; and (7) cattle run-in shed. This charming collection is not without its own architectural merit. Cohesive and well built of organic materials, the buildings represent the Colonial Revival style of architecture. In keeping with their rural setting, they embody simplicity of design and features associated with the Craftsman-style bungalows, barns and garages. East of the mansion are two sites, circa 1917-1920, including an elaborate boxwood garden, formed originally of more than 400 boxwoods to imitate the plan of the house, and a tennis court. One structure, a gazebo, is located near the center of the boxwood garden. The Rokeby complex retains a high degree of historic fabric and architectural integrity.

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Rokeby
King George County, Virginia

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The Rokeby mansion, once the centerpiece of a two-thousand-acre antebellum plantation, is now situated upon a pastoral fifty-acre tract. Formal conservation easements on the surrounding, horseshoe-shaped 270 acres have been adopted to protect the historic character of the mansion, dependencies, and gardens. The land surrounding Rokeby serves today, as it did historically, as a working farm. Principal applications are hay-crop production and pasture for both horses and cattle.

Rokeby is sited majestically on a level plateau at the top of a hill more than one-hundred feet above the Rappahannock River valley in King George County, Virginia. In 1934, surveyor H. Ragland Eubank wrote, "Rokeby, from its station upon the hill, commands a view of the valley of the Rappahannock and the reverential respect of lovers of quiet environment and stately dignity."¹ That statement remains true today. Just one mile from the river, the house affords a broad panorama of surrounding farmlands and rural countryside. Rokeby fronts on State Route 3; Fredericksburg is fourteen miles to the west, and King George Court House is five miles to the east. The entrance to the estate, immediately accessible from State Route 3, is distinctively marked by stone pillars. The dwelling is approached by a one-half-mile-long gravel road that climbs up the steep rise while passing through actively cultivated fields. The mansion is first viewed across the broad front lawn. Its backdrop is provided by enormous, mature trees including one of the largest black walnut trees in Virginia. The Rokeby complex also includes a collection of dependencies constructed between 1917 and 1920: (1) schoolhouse; (2) summer/tenant house; (3) playhouse; (4) smokehouse; (5) garage; (6) horse barn; (7) sheep barn; and (8) cattle run-in shed. East of the mansion, two historic sites survive including a boxwood garden and a tennis court. One structure, a gazebo, is situated near the center of the boxwood garden.

Rokeby is a handsome example of an early nineteenth-century Federal-style country mansion. The main block of the residence presents a formal façade and embodies numerous refined features of the Federal style including its symmetrical form, low-pitched hipped roof, smooth façade, tripartite windows, lintel-type window heads, and elliptical fanlight with flanking sidelights.² The main block of the mansion, 34 feet by 48 feet in plan, was constructed circa 1828 of red brick with glazed headers, laid in Flemish bond. It is believed that the brickwork was laid by the same mason who built nearby Powhatan mansion, circa 1832.³ The main blocks of the two mansions bear a striking similarity. The most notable differentiating feature between their front facades is the detailing, though not the scale, of the front entrance porticos.

The rectangular-shaped residence is built over a full English basement punctured with six-light windows and an outside entrance on the northwest corner. The original block is two stories high and three bays wide. Attention is drawn to the low-pitched hipped roof by the soaring

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Rokeby
King George County, Virginia

height

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of the paired interior brick end chimneys. The roof is manufactured slate shingles, composed of slate slurry and resins. The cornice, of white-painted wood, is broad and unadorned.

On both the north and south facades, historic fenestration consists of a regular rhythm of tripartite windows with lintel-style heads and wooden sills. Each window is composed of a central six-over-six double-hung, wood sash-style window flanked by diminutive two-over-two sash. Window size diminishes from the first to the second story. Louvered wood shutters adorn nearly all windows; several of the shutters appear to be original while others may date from the circa 1917 period of construction. None of the shutters have their original double-hinged configuration, visible in various historic photographs.

The showpiece of the front facade is the massive arched front entrance system with elliptical, leaded-glass fanlight and sidelights. Beneath a broad relieving arch, the wooden entrance frame is distinguished by inset panels, engaged pilasters, and arched, fluted molding. The eight-panel front door is broad and substantial. The front entrance is approached by a recently reconstructed, one-story, one-bay portico with brick pier foundation, paired Doric columns, engaged pilasters, wooden steps, and classical-style balustrade. The design of the replacement portico was adopted from the earliest known photograph of Rokeby as the mansion appeared circa 1896. Centered on the rear elevation is a grand two-story, one-bay pavilion. At both levels, outside front corners are supported by a trio of Doric columns while engaged pilasters provide inside support. The foundation is brick piers. The lower porch has a wooden deck, steps and rails, and classical-style balustrade while the upper porch displays a solid-panel railing.

In order to incorporate modern bathroom and kitchen facilities, the original block was enlarged by the construction circa 1912 of a pair of flanking two-story, frame pavilions, appended to the east and west. Internal evidence confirms that the original configuration of both wings was similar. To protect the dominant character of the main block, the wings were both set back from the front wall of the original mansion. The pavilions were one bay wide and two bays deep. They had hipped roofs, six-over-six, double-hung wooden sash, louvered shutters, and presumably one-story, hipped roof front porches. The historic porch survives today on the east wing. In their current form, the wings create an oddly asymmetrical appearance that contrasts with the harmony and balance of the main block. The historic west wing was encapsulated during the circa 1917-1920 building campaign. The length and depth of the wing was greatly enlarged, and the roof was elevated to a higher plane. The west wing today is brick laid in Flemish bond, four bays wide and four bays deep. It displays one interior chimney and an enclosed porch on the first story. The only structural similarity between the wings is that both are topped with slate-covered, hipped roofs. Windows on the front facade are irregularly sized and placed, originally designed to be camouflaged by the circa 1917 wrap around porch. The

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Rokeby
King George County, Virginia

porch, depicted in numerous historic photographs, was so dominant that Rokeby was mistakenly described as a frame mansion by

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two different surveyors in 1924 and 1933. The wrap-around porch fell into ruin several decades past, leaving the asymmetrical fenestration and deteriorated brickwork exposed.

The interior space covers more than six thousand square feet and includes six bedrooms, six-and-one-half bathrooms, dining room, library, two parlors, center halls on both floors, kitchen, butler's pantry, office, walk-out English basement, and porches. The center hall is balanced on each side by four spacious, well-proportioned rooms at each level. On the first floor, the four main rooms comprise the dining room, library, and two parlors. The focal point of each room is an original fireplace with refined wooden mantelpiece. Interior embellishments, including wide baseboards, asymmetrical, banded door and window trim, and handsome recessed paneling within the door openings and beneath the tripartite windows, are original. First floor ceilings are eleven-and-one-half feet in height. The entrance hall extends from front to back, with the staircase positioned in the rear half of the hall. One extraordinary feature of the grand first-floor entrance hall is the wide heart-pine floor boards, each thirty-six feet in length, that run continuously from door to door. The stair landing, halfway to the second floor, is bathed in natural light by a tripartite window. The four rooms of the main block on the second floor are bedrooms. The only alteration to the original plan of the main block is a hallway that runs from east to west off the center hall. This secondary hallway was carved from the bedroom in the northwest corner to provide access to the enlarged west wing. Otherwise, the gracious proportions of the original bedroom spaces have been preserved. Fortunately, the wing additions provided space on both floors for modern, utilitarian rooms, including the kitchen, closets, bathrooms, and servants' bedrooms, without imposing on the historic character of Rokeby. The basement has four large rooms with exposed brick walls, high ceiling planes, and poured concrete floors. Among four basement fireplaces, one is the large, original kitchen hearth. Fenestration is a regular rhythm of horizontally-shaped six-light windows. When the west wing was constructed, the original exterior basement stair was re-located from the west to the north elevation.

INVENTORY OF ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

Rokeby. Brick; 2-story (raised brick foundation); 3-bay main block (symmetrical) with paired interior end chimneys; hipped roof; 1-story, 1-bay front portico with brick piers, wooden steps, paired Doric columns, classical balustrade; front entrance system with ornate, lead-divided-glass fanlight and sidelights; relieving arch, inset panels, engaged pilasters, arched, fluted molding; 2-story, 1-bay rear veranda with Doric columns, engaged pilasters, classical-style balustrade, first story; solid-panel railing, second story; flanking 2-story, hip-roofed pavilions (asymmetrical); east pavilion is frame, 1 bay wide, 2 bays deep; 1-story, hip-roofed front porch; west pavilion is brick, 4 bays wide; 4 bays deep; one interior chimney; enclosed porch; Federal-

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Rokeby
King George County, Virginia

style residence; circa 1828. CONTRIBUTING BUILDING.

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Schoolhouse. Wood frame; ell-shaped; 1 story (brick foundation, parged); hipped roof; 3-bay main block with projecting front ell wing; interior brick chimney; 1-story front porch; Colonial Revival-style dependency; circa 1920. There is evidence to suggest that the building historically referred to as the schoolhouse is either a re-constructed version or replacement of an antebellum schoolhouse related to the mansion. CONTRIBUTING BUILDING.

Summer/Tenant house. Wood frame; 1 story (brick foundation); gable roof; 3 bays; central brick chimneys; flared eaves with deep overhang on front facade; front porch with brick piers, square columns, and wooden deck; Colonial Revival-style dependency; circa 1920. CONTRIBUTING BUILDING.

Playhouse. Wood frame; 1 story (brick piers); gable roof with central chimney; 3 bays; pedimented central pavilion with square columns, wooden deck, horizontal and raking cornices, concrete block piers; Colonial Revival-style dependency; circa 1920. CONTRIBUTING BUILDING.

Smokehouse. Wood frame; 1 story (brick foundation); pyramidal hipped roof with decorative finial; 1 bay; Utilitarian outbuilding; circa 1828. CONTRIBUTING BUILDING.

Garage. Wood frame; one and one-half story (concrete foundation); gable roof; 3 bays; projecting front shed roof over garage doors; three pedimented dormers at second story; Utilitarian outbuilding, circa 1920. CONTRIBUTING BUILDING.

Garden Gazebo. Wood frame; 1 story; open-bay structure; pyramidal hipped roof; Horticultural building; circa 1920. CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE.

Horse Barn. Wood frame; one and one-half story (concrete foundation); double-pitched (broken-pitched) hipped roof with end dormers; full-length hay loft; 5 bays; flared eaves; Sears Roebuck catalog barn; Utilitarian agricultural outbuilding, circa 1920. CONTRIBUTING BUILDING.

Sheep Barn. Post-and-beam frame; 1 story (post support); enclosed main block; 1 bay; gable roof; front and rear flanking shed-roofed lean-tos; Utilitarian agricultural outbuilding, circa 1920. One of the roof framing members is stamped with the RF&P Railroad insignia, suggesting that Langbourne Williams, as president of the railroad company, had access to new construction or perhaps salvage materials owned by the company. CONTRIBUTING BUILDING.

Cattle Run-In Shed. Post-and-beam frame; 1 story; longitudinal, open-bay structure; gable roof; utilitarian agricultural outbuilding, circa 1920. CONTRIBUTING BUILDING.

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Rokeby
King George County, Virginia

Boxwood garden. Mature collection of nearly 200 original specimens. CONTRIBUTING SITE.

Tennis court. Asphalt, regulation size. CONTRIBUTING SITE.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Under Criterion A, Rokeby possesses local significance in both agricultural and social history. The story of Rokeby tells the story of domestic life and the agrarian economy of King George County during the formative years of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the nation. The mansion and its original 2,000 acres may be defined as a plantation, an agricultural unit that produced cash crops and required a large labor force that included slaves. Unlike a smaller, self-sufficient family farm of the period, the early plantation functioned as a sophisticated agribusiness, part of a complex economic, political, and social network. Between 1820 and 1840, for example, census records reveal that eighty-six slaves and an additional thirty-three workers were employed on the plantation in agriculture and manufacture. Rokeby was the domicile of Gustavus Brown Wallace, one of a limited group of wealthy, powerful planters responsible for the antebellum landscape of King George County. Rokeby and other nearby plantations were renowned for their elegance, gracious hospitality, and dignity. Sons were unusually well educated for the period, and daughters were frequently married among prosperous families, ensuring a legacy of wealth and power. The residents of Rokeby would have exchanged hospitality and friendship with the owners of the surrounding, contemporaneous plantations, forming the basis of the social fabric of the region.

The Rokeby complex qualifies under criterion B because of its association with Gustavus Brown Wallace and Langbourne Meade Williams. Langbourne Meade Williams was one of Richmond's most successful investment bankers in the early part of the twentieth century. Langbourne Williams and his brothers wielded the financial strength of his father's investment banking firm to organize the Richmond Traction Company and the Virginia Electric Light and Power Company (now Dominion Power) and to develop water power in Richmond. Williams founded the Freeport Texas Company, one of only two sulfur producing companies in the United States at the time. A brilliant businessman, Langbourne Williams was promoted to the presidency of multiple industries in Richmond, including the Bank of Richmond, the Raleigh and Charleston Railroad, the Tidewater and Western Railroad, the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad, the Westhampton Park Railway, and the Southern Investment Company. During the First World War, Langbourne Williams served as the chief of the American Protective League for the Commonwealth of Virginia. After he purchased Rokeby in 1916, Williams enlarged the house and organized a building program to transform Rokeby and its pastoral setting into a playground for the wealthy and powerful members of Virginia's political elite. Members of the legislature and even the governor enjoyed parties and picnics at Rokeby. Langbourne Meade Williams and his immediate family owned Rokeby for the longest tenure of

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any of the owners, forty-five years. Because the principal residence of Langbourne Meade Williams in Richmond at 1219 West Franklin Street was demolished in 1964, Rokeby is the sole surviving residence associated with this prominent Virginia.

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In the area of architecture, Rokeby is also eligible under Criterion C as an excellent surviving example of an early nineteenth-century Federal-style country mansion. The formal façade of the main block of the dwelling embodies numerous refined features of the Federal style including its symmetrical form, low-pitched hipped roof, smooth façade, tripartite windows, lintel-type window heads, and elliptical fanlight with flanking sidelights. The Flemish bond and struck mortar joints exhibit high quality period construction and fine craftsmanship. In addition to the antebellum mansion and smokehouse, the estate also encompasses seven contributing buildings, two contributing sites, and one contributing structure. Constructed between 1917 and 1920, the contributing buildings have considerable architectural merit. The charming collection includes a schoolhouse, a summer/tenant house, a playhouse, a garage, a Sears, Roebuck catalog-ordered horse barn, a sheep barn, and a cattle run-in shed. Cohesive and well built of organic materials, the buildings represent the neo-colonial period of architecture. In keeping with their rural setting, they embody simplicity of design and features associated with the Craftsman-style bungalows, barns and garages. A boxwood garden, gazebo, and tennis court that survive from the same period augment the significance of the complex. Rokeby retains a high degree of historic fabric and architectural integrity. The period of significance for Rokeby is circa 1828 through 1920.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Rokeby is believed to have been originally constructed circa 1828. Several sources suggest that the same mason who built nearby Powhatan also built Rokeby.⁴ Powhatan, constructed in the early 1830s,⁵ is strikingly similar to Rokeby in architectural style, Flemish bond, mortar joint detail, fenestration, and exterior embellishment. Precisely which early owner was responsible for the construction of Rokeby is unclear, but the early history of the plantation is most often associated with Gustavus Brown Wallace, Sr. Wallace was a member of a large extended family of social, political, and economic prominence in Virginia's colonial and antebellum history. His earliest ancestors in America were Dr. Gustavus Brown and Dr. Michael Wallace, both distinguished physicians, who came to America from Scotland in 1708 and 1734, respectively.⁶ Members of the prolific Wallace family owned extensive tracts of land in then-Stafford County, extending from the mouth of the Potomac River to Fredericksburg. Eilerslie, five miles from Fredericksburg, is known as the ancestral seat of the Stafford County branch of the Wallace family.⁷

Gustavus B. Wallace, Sr., was a graduate of Princeton College, a member of the American Whig Society at Princeton, and a private soldier in Captain Brown's Company, 25th Virginia Regiment, during the War of 1812.⁸ He was the son of Major Michael Wallace and Lettice

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Smith Wishart. Major Michael is described as "a man of large stature and extraordinary physical strength...active in the cause of the colonies in 1776."⁹ In addition to military service, his most definitive act in support of the Revolution was the signing of the Albemarle Renunciation of all

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Allegiance to George III, King of Great Britain, His Heirs and Successors. In 1775, he married Lettice Wishart, the widow of Reverend James Wishart of Lamb's Creek Church. As a result, the plantation White Hall came into and remained for many years in the possession of the Wallace family.¹⁰ When he died in 1813, Major Michael Wallace willed extensive land holdings in both Virginia and Kentucky to his son Gustavus B. Wallace, Sr.¹¹

Gustavus Brown Wallace, Sr. (1776-1845), was the nephew of General Gustavus Brown Wallace (1751-1802), one of seven generals from Fredericksburg who fought in the Revolutionary War.¹² Son of Dr. Michael Wallace and Elizabeth Brown, General Gustavus Brown Wallace was born at Ellerslie.¹³ He studied law in 1774, but when the news about the battles in Lexington and Concord reached Fredericksburg, he volunteered for military service, entering the Continental Army in 1775, along with other future generals George Washington, Hugh Mercer, George Weedon, William Woodford, Thomas Posey, and Oliver Towles.¹⁴ So distinguished was his military service, that when the war ended, he was granted 7,000 acres of land plus an additional 960 acres for special service.¹⁵ In 1802, on a return trip from Scotland, he contracted typhus and died. He is buried in the Masonic Cemetery in Fredericksburg. He never married, but it appears that his vast estate was inherited by his seven brothers and their heirs. Gustavus Brown Wallace, Sr. of Rokeby was one of his collateral descendents who was intentionally named to honor and perpetuate the memory of the revered General Wallace.¹⁶ A first cousin of Gustavus Brown Wallace, Sr., Gustavus Brown Wallace of Ellerslie, was married to Emily Travers Daniel, granddaughter of Thomas Stone who signed the Declaration of Independence.¹⁷

In the early part of the nineteenth century, Rokeby occupied the center of a vast plantation of approximately two thousand acres. The substantial size, quality of construction, and internal elegance of the mansion suggest that Gustavus B. Wallace, Sr., and his family enjoyed a comfortable prosperity from their agricultural-based estate. Census records from 1820-1840 reveal that Gustavus B. Wallace, Sr. owned eighty-six slaves and employed an additional thirty-three workers in agriculture and manufacture.¹⁸ In speaking of Cleveland and Rokeby, Confederate General Dabney H. Maury during the Civil War,¹⁹ reflected that "These homes were then the abode of very great comfort and dignity; a generous and elegant hospitality was universal. The house servants were long and carefully trained..."²⁰ Cleveland was originally part of the renowned Fitzhugh estate. Later, in the antebellum period, it belonged to the Mason family.²¹ The residents of Rokeby would have enjoyed and exchanged hospitality and friendship with the owners of the surrounding, contemporaneous plantations.

Other significant mansions in close geographic proximity from the same era of construction

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include Litchfield (ca.1802); Shelbourne (circa 1870); Cleveland (circa 1800); Comorn (circa 1850); Cedar Grove, and Powhatan (circa 1832). Named for King George I of England, King George County was formed from Richmond County in 1720. Notable residents include George Washington who lived for approximately ten years as a youth at Ferry Farm; James Madison,

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born at Port Conway, near Belle Grove, in 1751; Colonel Joseph Jones, uncle of James Monroe; William Fitzhugh of Bedford; Robert "King" Carter of Cleve; and Edward Thornton Tayloe of Powhatan.

In 1924, Dora Jett, a writer from Fredericksburg, began a tour of historic homes in order to tell "the simple story of the old homes on the Rappahannock River." She believed that the builders of these mansions intended the structures to last and that "many of these old homes repeat, in part, the social and economic features of the picturesque life of the old South." Remarkable features of Rokeby observed by Dora Jett were "inviting porticos, grand old trees, the alluring flower garden, and the summer house with its tempting shade..."²²

An Abstract of Title prepared in 1916 by Judge A.T. Embrey of Fredericksburg²³ traces the Wallace connection to Rokeby back as far as 1842 when Gustavus B. Wallace, Sr. owned the mansion on 966 acres. He married Francis Lurty in 1805, and they had seven children, Gustavus Brown Wallace, Jr.; Robert ; Mary Fenton; James; Michael; William; and Elizabeth. When he died in 1845, Wallace, Sr. left, in addition to other land holdings, the "Mansion Tract" with 304 acres to his son Gustavus B. Wallace, Jr. Little is known about Gustavus B. Wallace, Jr., who died at the age of twenty. However, it is recorded that Gustavus B., Jr. conveyed the "Mansion House Tract" to his brother Robert Wallace on November 2, 1848.²⁴ Robert is described as "a highly cultivated and intellectual man, a lawyer by profession and a man of note. Educated at the Univ. Va., 1825-6-7, Mem. of the Va. Leg. for some years, he might have acquired eminence, but he retired early from public life to the enjoyment of his home and the cultivation of his lands..."²⁵ Where Robert Wallace was in residence during the Civil War is unclear, but it is well known that Rokeby was used by General Ambrose Burnside as Union headquarters during the winter of 1862-1863, between the battles of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville.²⁶ At some point, Robert Wallace, who was by then nearly sixty years old, was arrested and imprisoned near Aquia Creek. He never recovered from his ordeal, and he died, unmarried and without heirs, in 1867 at the age of 61. At that time, Robert Wallace owned 2,102 acres, plus "Marlboro" on the Potomac Creek in Stafford County.²⁷

His property was divided on June 10, 1867 into four parcels of equal value: 257 acres, "The Brick House Lot", likely Rokeby; 417 acres, "The White House Lot"; 714 acres; and 714 acres. The land was conveyed to his surviving brothers and sisters. His sister Elizabeth Wallace Nalle inherited 257 acres identified as "The Brick House Lot."²⁸ In 1876, when William Wallace went bankrupt, a 587-acre parcel that he inherited from his brother Robert were referred to as "a part of Rokeby", implying that the name had been previously associated with the estate of Gustavus

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B. Wallace, Sr.

On a parenthetical note, it may be of interest to note that the Wallace family is inadvertently responsible for inspiring a preservation movement in the City of Fredericksburg, Virginia. Charles Wallace and Brother, wholesale and retail grocers, owned "one of the most handsome

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buildings ever to grace Caroline Street."²⁹ Constructed in 1867, the building was demolished in 1955. Its demolition resulted in the formation by concerned citizens of Historic Fredericksburg, Inc.

Elizabeth and her husband Philip Nalle immediately sold Rokeby on September 28, 1867, to J. Hatley and Louisa K. Norton for \$6,000. Ten years later, on April 6, 1877, they sold the estate to James M. Matthews, Trustee for Alice P. Matthews, wife of William P. Matthews, for \$5,000. James M. Matthews conveyed Rokeby and 257 acres on April 12, 1879, to Henry Endors for \$5,000.

Henry Endors (1836-1919), a retired sea captain, lived at Rokeby for thirty-seven years between 1879 and 1916. When he died in 1919, Captain Endors was buried in a cemetery, sixteen-foot-square, on the property. Although Endors had sold Rokeby before his death, he had retained the right to burial and visitation in perpetuity for himself and his heirs because his only son Harry (1890- 1902) was buried there. The cemetery is now located on a one-hundred-and-twenty-acre tract that was subdivided from the Rokeby estate, along with the former farm manager's house. The farm manager's house, now in ruins and overgrown with ivy, is located approximately twenty yards from the horse barn. Captain Endors's granddaughter, who at the time of this writing is around eighty-five-years old, resides part of each year in Fredericksburg. When she visited the cemetery circa 2002, she produced several historic photographs and relayed to current-owner William Boldon that in 1880, Rokeby had on its front façade a two-story portico. A tornado demolished the second-story roof. The remainder of the portico was retained and converted into a one-story porch with balustrade.³⁰ Internal evidence at what is now the center front window confirms that a door once provided access to the porch from the center hall on the second floor. Since 1880, however, the front portico at Rokeby has been only one story.

Henry Ensor sold Rokeby to Langbourne Meade Williams in 1916. Williams and his family have the distinction of having retained possession of Rokeby for the longest duration. For more than forty-five years, the mansion served as the summer home for the extended family of Langbourne Williams (1872-1931), one of Richmond's most successful investment bankers in the early decades of the twentieth century. He was named after his uncle William Langbourne who served as an aide to Marquis de Lafayette in the Revolutionary War.³¹ Langbourne M. Williams was the fourth son of John L. Williams and Maria Ward Skelton, of Paxton, in Powhatan County, and granddaughter of Edmund Randolph, an early governor of Virginia.

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John L. and Maria Skelton Williams and their seven sons are buried in Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond. The brother of Langbourne, John Skelton Williams (1865-1926), founded the Seaboard Airline Railroad and served as U.S. Assistant Secretary of the Treasury and Comptroller of the Currency during the administration of Woodrow Wilson.³² Another brother E. Randolph Williams (1871-1952) served as general counsel of both the Virginia Railroad and Power Company (parent of Dominion Power Company) and of the Richmond, Fredericksburg,

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and Potomac Railroad Company for more than thirty years. In the field of medicine, his brother Ennion (1874-1931) was a prominent and respected physician on staff at the Medical College of Virginia who served for decades as the Health Commissioner for the Commonwealth of Virginia. Introducing innovative changes in health care practices in the Commonwealth, he is credited with having increased the life expectancy of the average Virginian by more than ten years. The Williams family tree reads as a "Who's Who" in the history of Virginia and includes the family names Randolph, Bemiss, Dandridge, and Carter. Members of the Williams family co-founded Hunton and Williams, one of the largest law firms in the United States, and donated the principal hospital for the Medical College of Virginia.³³ Most of the extended family of Langbourne Williams enjoyed regular parties and vacations at Rokeby. Historic photographs portray large and lively social gatherings.

Langbourne M. Williams graduated from the McGuire's School in Richmond, with honors from the University of Virginia in 1891, and from the University of Pennsylvania in 1893. He returned to Richmond to join the banking and brokerage firm John L. Williams & Sons, founded by his father. He maintained banking offices for more than thirty years at 801 East Main Street and his personal residence (ca. 1900) at 1219 West Franklin Street. In later years, he served as president of the Raleigh & Charleston Railroad Company, president of the Bank of Richmond, president of the Tidewater & Western Railroad Company, president of the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad Company, and president of the Southern Investment Company.

Langbourne Meade Williams is responsible for the building campaign circa 1917-1920 that produced the complex of dependencies related to Rokeby. The ell-shaped frame building immediately behind Rokeby has long been called "the schoolhouse". Although substantially reconstructed and used as a guest house by the Williams family, it may survive from the Wallace tenure. The other small frame house, identified in more recent history as the "tenant house" was likely the former "summer house". It has the form of a summer kitchen commonly found on rural farms in the early part of the twentieth century. The house was rented during the early 1940s to a nuclear scientist who worked nearby at the Dahlgren Naval Surface Warfare Center on the Manhattan project, responsible for the production of the first atomic bomb. Since that time, the house has been called "the tenant house."

Williams also fabricated a tennis court and boxwood garden with gazebo east of the

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mansion. Both survive in good condition, sheltered by one of the largest black walnut trees in Virginia. One of Langbourne's daughters, who died prematurely at age nineteen, is said to have designed the boxwood garden. Unfortunately its original form is no longer clear today, but the garden was laid out to mirror the rooms of Rokeby. The tennis court, although currently playable, is cracked and dotted with vegetation. According to Brown Morton, professor of architectural history at Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, this is its historical condition. In the 1940s and 1950s,

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his family maintained a summer home in a coastal area of Virginia. His family and the Williams family were good friends, so they alternated between the pleasure of a beach-front retreat and Rokeby, acknowledged as the retreat for tennis. Brown Morton remembers that pulling weeds from the tennis courts was one of the children's regular obligations.³⁴

The farm manager's house, now in ruins and on an adjacent land parcel, was also part of the Williams family complex. Two landing strips and a swimming pool, also constructed by Langbourne Williams, are no longer visible. According to local folklore, the landing strips were built after Langbourne Meade Williams, Jr., then a student at the University of Virginia, won a bi-plane in a poker game. Without training or experience, he flew the plane to Rokeby ca. 1920 and landed presumably in an open field. His chagrined parents subsequently installed two runways made of oyster shells and a hangar. Langbourne, Jr. was compelled to take flying lessons, which he dutifully completed by mail-order course.³⁵

Another interesting anecdote related to the Williams family's tenure at Rokeby is described in a brief history outlined by George Williams, son of Langbourne. When Langbourne Williams purchased the property, a small brass plate on the front door indicated that the dwelling had been occupied by the Union army during the Civil War. "In any event, Father would not allow a Yankee plate to remain on his house, so he promptly removed and hid it."³⁶

Rokeby is not the only dwelling in the Rappahannock River valley owned by and subsequently rehabilitated by Langbourne Meade Williams. According to the director of the Emmaus School for Girls, Shelbourne, circa 1870, former home of Judge John E. Mason, was purchased and restored by Williams in 1927.³⁷

Langbourne Meade Williams was married to Susanne C. Nolting, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. E.O. Nolting. E.O. Nolting, Esquire, was a prominent banker and tobacconist in Richmond. Langbourne and Susanne Williams had nine children: three sons and six daughters. Their children were: John L., Jr.; Maria Ward; Langbourne M., Jr.; Susanne C.; Frank McGuire.; E. Otto; Charlotte Randolph; George Dandridge; and Anne Armistead.³⁸ Langbourne Meade Williams, Jr., took his B.A. at the University of Virginia in 1924, and his M.B.A. from Harvard University in 1926. He served for many years on the Board of Visitors at the University of

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Virginia and was also a founder of the Society of Fellows. An endowed chair is named in his honor. As a child, Susanne Williams (b. 1946), daughter of George Williams, stabled her horse Stonewall in the Sears, Roebuck catalog-ordered horse barn at Rokeby. A small sign was attached to the place where she maintained her bridle. On a recent visit from her home in Maine, she was surprised to discover that the sign "Stonewall" is preserved in its original place on the wall of the horse barn.³⁹

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Rokeby was sold in 1961 by the Williams Family Trust to Devereux Green Hill. Hill, an attorney in Washington, D.C. conveyed the estate to Fritz-Alan Korth, Trustee, in October, 1977. The next owners were Scott A. and Teresa C. Broadbent who bought Rokeby and 320 acres on November 12, 1985. The Broadbents sold a 270-acre land parcel to Thomas Kramer in 1994, and Rokeby and 50-acre land parcel to William and Dorothy Boldon on October 4, 2000. At that same time, Thomas Kramer sold the Boldons an additional 80 acres that were once part of the larger Rokeby estate.

In addition to the Rokeby of King George County, Virginia, considered in this nomination report, at least three other dwellings named Rokeby are located in Virginia. In Leesburg, Loudoun County, Virginia, the Georgian mansion also called Rokeby was built in 1757 by Charles Binns, II, and his wife Anne, daughter of John Alexander, the founder of Alexandria, Virginia. The name Rokeby may be derived from an internationally acclaimed poem written by Sir Walter Scott in 1813. The poem describes Rokeby, an estate in County Durham, in reverent, idyllic prose. The Leesburg mansion is believed to have been more specifically named Rokeby in 1830 by then-owner Benjamin Shreve who descended by Henry de Rokeby of Rugby Parish in England.⁴⁰

Another antebellum Virginia farm known as Rokeby is located on Machodoc Creek in northeastern King George County. Built ca. 1850, it was the home of George D. Ashton who married Martha Brown, also of King George County, Virginia. According to a report on file in the King George Historical Society, George Ashton was a "cultivated gentleman, and for a time was school teacher as well as gentleman farmer."⁴¹ It is also recorded that Rokeby, located two miles from Washington's Mill, served for many years as the local post office and that "Rokeby Farm was originally one of considerable size [owned by the Webster Miffleton family] from which several smaller farms were chiseled." To date, it has not been proved that there is a connection between the subject of this report and Rokeby on the Machodoc Creek.

Finally, the third Rokeby is located in Upperville, Fauquier County, Virginia. This Rokeby, owned by the late Paul Mellon, is associated with "a substantial farm business, including a thoroughbred breeding, training and racing operation".⁴² In a series of letters dated between June and August, 1987, lawyers representing Mr. Mellon and Mr. and Mrs. Scott Broadbent

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debated the proprietary merits related to the names "Rokeby" and "Rokeby Farm." The legal confrontation between the parties ended in an amicable stand-off, with Mr. Mellon and his lawyers conceding to the owners of the Rokeby on the Kings Highway the right to the use the name.

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Rokeby. Conversation with William Boldon, recorded by note, August 13, 2004. Mr. Boldon and his wife Dorothy have received numerous interested visitors at Rokeby since they purchased the property in October, 2000. The stories about Rokeby's past have come from these various visitors who are either descendents or friends of former owners.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the nominated parcel are depicted on the U.S.G.S. King George, VA/MD topographic map and on the enclosed Plat of Survey dated October 25, 1977. The nomination property is shown on the survey as "Parcel A". From Point A, 1561.39 feet north to the base of a large cedar tree; then west 207.77 feet west along the existing fence; thence north 1105.32 feet to point B; thence east 437.35 feet to Point C; thence south 2286.98 feet to Point D; thence west 583.32 feet, returning to Point A. The boundaries of the nominated parcel are also identified in the King George County Tax Assessor's records as Map 23, Parcel 23.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the nominated property have been drawn according to the legally recorded boundary lines to encompass the 50 acres of land area making up the property and the full extent of the significant resources including the historic two-story mansion known as Rokeby, schoolhouse, summer/tenant house, playhouse, smokehouse, garage, gazebo, horse barn, sheep barn, cattle run-in shed, boxwood garden with gazebo, and tennis court. There are no other structures, buildings, or sites on the parcel.

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The following information is the same for all photographs:

Property: Rokeby, DHR File no. 048-0019
Location: King George County, Virginia
Photographer: Nancy W. Kraus
Date: August 13, 2004
Negative File: Virginia Department of Historic Resources; Richmond, Virginia
Negative Numbers: 21737; 21738

Photo # 1 of 18: Main house; Primary south elevation; view looking north. Negative no. 21737:4.

Photo # 2 of 18: Main house; North elevation; view looking south. Negative no. 21737:20.

Photo # 3 of 18: Main house; East pavilion; view looking west. Negative no. 21737:7.

Photo # 4 of 18: Main house; West pavilion; view looking east. Negative no. 21737:1.

Photo # 5 of 18: Playhouse. Negative no. 21737:4.10.

Photo # 6 of 18: Smokehouse. Negative no. 21737:11.

Photo # 7 of 18: Sheep barn. Negative no. 21737:4.18.

Photo # 8 of 18: Guest house. Negative no. 21737:12.

Photo #9 of 18: Garage. Negative no. 21737:13.

Photo # 10 of 18: Sears Roebuck catalog-ordered horse barn. Negative no. 21737:19.

Photo #11 of 18: Summer house. Negative no. 21737:14.

Photo #12 of 18: Cattle run-in shed. Negative no. 21737:17.

Photo #13 of 18: Boxwood garden and gazebo. Negative no. 21737:8.

Photo #14 of 18: Front entrance system. Negative no. 21738:6.

Photo #15 of 18: Entrance hall. Negative no. 21738:7.

Photo #16 of 18: Typical door panel. Negative no. 21738:13.

Photo #17 of 18: Parlor fireplace. Negative no. 21738:14.

Photo #18 of 18: Dining room fireplace. Negative no. 21738:4.

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End Notes

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